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SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL: WELCOMING JANEZ LENARCIC,S APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR OF ODIHR

¶1. Post is authorized to make the following statement at the May 15, 2008 meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna:

Begin Text:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States joins other delegations in offering our sincere congratulations to Janez Lenarcic on his selection as ODIHR,s incoming Director. We are delighted with his appointment and we look forward to continuing the excellent working relationship we developed with him during his tenure as Chairman of the Permanent Council in 2005.

Ambassador Lenarcic,s in-depth knowledge of the OSCE will serve him well in his new capacity. ODIHR carries out some of the OSCE,s most important work, not just in the field of elections, but also in promoting the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the OSCE area.

We also would like to thank Director Strohal for his tireless dedication to ODIHR over the past five years. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

RICE